

Washington, D.C. - Congressman Sanford Bishop, a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, announced that the full House of Representatives last night approved the fiscal year (FY) 2008 Defense Appropriations bill, which allocates \$459 billion to the Department of Defense for the funding of our troops, including first class weapons, equipment, training, facilities, and health care services. This includes giving a pay raise to all military personnel, rejecting the President's request to increase TRICARE co-pays, and fully funding the upgrade and purchase of equipment crucial to the continued security of our nation. Additionally, several key provisions of the bill's language address improving oversight of government contractors, including allocating increased funding to the agencies that audit defense projects.

"For the first time in several years, this bill takes a very hard look at the procurement practices of the DoD, and attempts to bring some sanity to a process that remains costly, but experiences lapses in departmental oversight. I believe this bill is not only a victory for our soldiers, but also our taxpayers, who for too long have had to shoulder these out-of-control defense costs," said Congressman Bishop.

The bill also allocates \$116 million to upgrade barracks, improve child-care facilities, and enhance community services at Fort Benning, and \$2 million for such purposes related to Georgia's National Guard. This funding is a part of a \$1.2 billion provision within the bill to address the impact of rebasing activities as large numbers of service members are re-stationed to the continental United States from overseas, including from within Iraq and Afghanistan.

"In the next few years, Fort Benning will experience a dramatic increase in the number of troops stationed there, and the funds for the base in this bill will help upgrade facilities in anticipation of meeting their needs."

In addition, Congressman Bishop was successful in securing funding for a number of projects of benefit to the Second Congressional District and Georgia, including \$7.5 million for the Fort Benning Soldier Center at Patriot Park, a \$3 million Automatic Identification and Data Capture (AIDC) Solution Center to be located at the Marine Corps Logistics Center (MCLB) in Albany, and \$2 million to help Phoebe Putney Hospital establish a Technical Regional Center of Excellence for sufferers of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

"Our military facilities in Southwest Georgia spur the economic engines both locally and regionally and represent hundreds of millions of dollars in investment, as well as thousands of jobs. As a member of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, I am pleased to have been able to have a hand in keeping this sector of the economy strong."

The bill must be reconciled with the Senate version and considered by a Conference Committee before being sent to the President.

For a full summary of the FY 2008 Defense Appropriations bill, please visit the Appropriations website: <http://appropriations.house.gov/pdf/DefenseSummaryFC.pdf>

Other projects included in the bill of benefit to Georgia:

- Funding for the construction of the Ft. Benning Soldier Center at Patriot Park. \$7,500,000
- Automatic Identification and Data Capture (AIDC) Solution Center - To provide cost effective solutions to depot requirements in the areas of bar code, radio frequency identification (RFID), smart cards, serial number tracking (SNT), and unique identification of tangible items (UID), to be located at Marine Corps Logistics Command, Marine Corps Logistics Base, Albany. \$3,500,000
- Technical Regional Center of Excellence for PTSD - Regional Center for Excellence (PTSD) - to understand the existing methods of training, diagnosis, treatment, and technological advances to define the most promising and effective treatment strategies for PTSD, Phoebe Putney Hospital, Albany. \$2,000,000
- Recapturing the Army's Training Ranges - Funding for the development of a pilot program for vegetation management and animal control; will assist in recapturing the Army's Training Ranges at Fort Benning and assist in meeting ongoing environmental requirements with respect to Red-Cockaded Woodpecker and vegetation management. \$1,000,000
- Logistics Analysis and Optimization Center - to sponsor Logistics Analysis and Optimization efforts including Design and Prototype of IT enablers, for capabilities enhancement and to test solutions prior to infusing technology or replacing USMC logistics tools; to be conducted at the USMLC/ Albany. \$1,500,000